IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An assembly of two fluid tight expandable threaded tubular joints, disposed symmetrically and each comprising:

a first tubular element arranged at an end of a tube and comprising a first portion provided with a male thread, and a second portion extending said first portion and comprising

i) a first outer surface,

ii) a first annular lip having a first axial abutment surface and a first inner surface and delimited by said first outer surface over a portion of the axial length thereof, and

iii) a second abutment surface, and

a second tubular element comprising

i) a female thread, matching the first male thread and screwed thereto,

ii) a second annular lip, having a third abutment surface, a second outer surface, configured to be arranged to face said first inner surface, and a second inner surface, and wherein

iii) a third inner surface and a fourth axial abutment surface defining with the second outer surface an annular recess matching and receiving the corresponding first lip, wherein

said second tubular element is disposed on each of two opposing ends of a female/female connection sleeve, separated by a central portion initially provided, [[over]] with an outer annular surface, said outer annular surface having a diameter smaller than the outer diameter of the annular surface of portions of the sleeve provided with the female thread, the diameter of the outer annular surface of the central portion being ~~with an annular zone having an initial reduced thickness~~ selected such that the section of the sleeve in the

region of this [[zone]] outer annular surface is greater than or equal to the smallest of the critical sections of the threaded elements of the joints, each second abutment surface rests against the corresponding third abutment surface and/or each first abutment surface rests against the corresponding fourth abutment surface,

wherein the ~~annular zone~~ outer annular surface extends, axially, from an innermost end of the female thread on a first of the two opposing ends of the female/female connection sleeve to an innermost end of the female thread on a second of the two opposing ends of the female/female connection sleeve,

wherein the assembly is configured to develop, after diametral expansion in the plastic deformation region, sealing interference contacts sealing the assembly, and the first and second tubular elements will be sealed with respect to a pressure difference between the inside and outside of the first and second tubular elements.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said ~~zone of reduced thickness~~ outer annular surface is in the form of a dish provided with a ~~central portion~~ center having [[said]] a maximum reduced thickness and lateral walls inclined at an angle of less than approximately 30°.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 2, wherein said angle is equal to approximately 15°.

Claim 4 (Canceled).

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 2, wherein said dish extends substantially between said third abutment surfaces of the two second tubular elements.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said second tubular element comprises, at a selected location of its third inner surface, an inner annular groove arranged substantially in the region of said first outer surface.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 6, wherein said groove initially comprises at least two curvilinear portions.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 7, wherein said curvilinear portions initially have substantially identical radii of curvature.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 8, wherein said radius of curvature is initially between approximately 2 mm and approximately 20 mm.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 7, wherein the two curvilinear portions are separated by a substantially cylindrical central portion extending parallel to a longitudinal axis of the assembly.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 7, wherein said groove initially has a radial depth, the maximum value of which is selected such that the material section at the bottom of the groove is greater than the product of the smallest section of a common portion of said tubes, and the efficiency of the joint under tension.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said male and female threads initially comprise threads provided with a carrier flank having a negative angle of between approximately -3° and approximately -15°.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said male and female threads initially comprise threads provided with a stabbing flank having a positive angle of between approximately +10° and approximately +30°.

Claim 14 (Canceled).

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said male and female threads are selected from a group consisting of conical and cylindrical threads and are each formed over at least one tubular element portion.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said first outer surface and third inner surface are shaped in such a way that, after expansion, a sealing interference contact is defined between a portion of each of them.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said first and second expandable tubular elements are shaped in such a way that, after said expansion, a sealing interference contact is defined between an inner end portion of said first lip and said second outer surface.

Claim 18 (Withdrawn): A method for assembling two fluid tight expanded tubular joints, the method comprising,

providing a first tubular element arranged at an end of a tube and comprising a first portion provided with a male thread, and a second portion extending said first portion and comprising

i) a first outer surface,

ii) a first annular lip having a first axial abutment surface and a first inner surface and delimited by said first outer surface over a portion of the axial length thereof, and

iii) a second abutment surface, and

a second tubular element comprising

i) a female thread, matching the first male thread and screwed thereto,

ii) a second annular lip, having a third abutment surface, a second outer surface, configured to be arranged to face said first inner surface, and a second inner surface, and wherein

iii) a third inner surface and a fourth axial abutment surface defining with the second outer surface an annular recess matching and receiving the corresponding first lip,

wherein said second tubular element is disposed on each of two opposing ends of a female/female connection sleeve, separated by a central portion initially provided, over an outer surface, with an annular zone having an initial reduced thickness selected such that the section of the sleeve in the region of this zone is greater than or equal to the smallest of the critical sections of the threaded elements of the joints, each second abutment surface rests against the corresponding third

abutment surface and/or in that each first abutment surface rests against the corresponding fourth abutment surface,

wherein the annular zone extends, axially, from the third abutment surface on a first of the two opposing ends of the female/female connection sleeve to the third abutment surface on a second of the two opposing ends of the female/female connection sleeve,

wherein the assembly is configured to develop, after diametral expansion in the plastic deformation region, sealing interference contacts sealing the assembly, and

the first and second tubular elements will be sealed with respect to a pressure difference between the inside and outside of the first and second tubular elements;

screwing said first and second expandable tubular elements until each second abutment surface rests against the corresponding third abutment surface and/or each first abutment surface rests against the corresponding fourth abutment surface, and

subjecting said assembly of expandable tubular joints to a diametral expansion in the plastic deformation region so as to develop at least one sealing interference contact between a surface of each second portion and a corresponding surface of each second tubular element.

Claim 19 (Withdrawn): The method according to claim 18, wherein the radial expansion of the joint takes place at an expansion rate at least equal to 10%.

Claim 20 (Canceled).

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 2, wherein said second tubular element comprises, at a selected location of its third inner surface, an inner annular groove arranged substantially in the region of said first outer surface.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 6, wherein the assembly is configured to develop, after expansion in the plastic deformation region, sealing interference contact of the first annular lip with a portion of the groove.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The assembly according to claim 22, wherein the first annular lip takes on a shape of the portion of the groove after the expansion in the plastic deformation region.